

Proposal to Become a Sanctuary Congregation

TO: WWUUC Congregation

FROM: Social Justice Committee

DATE: April, 2017

The Social Justice Committee proposes that the congregation vote at the annual meeting on whether WWUUC should become a Sanctuary Congregation as part of the UUA Sanctuary Movement. Recent events that have stepped up deportation of law abiding residents, loyal to the United States, many of whom have families here, have spread fear throughout the Latino communities. Some people are fleeing to Canada, rather than be separated from their children or to go back to a violent or desperately poverty--stricken home country. A Sanctuary Congregation would defend our neighbors and friends in our local area from the danger of deportation.

The Social Justice Committee is willing to do research and educational materials on the situation, locally and nationally, before the vote, and to coordinate those willing to volunteer in the sanctuary movement should we vote to participate.

According to the UUA:

The Sanctuary Movement is a growing movement of faith and immigrant communities working to protect immigrants facing deportation by literally offering sanctuary to people who are at risk of being deported.

Unitarian Universalist congregations and organizations that support the Sanctuary Movement and/or are offering sanctuary are declaring themselves to be Sanctuary Congregations, which are listed on the UUA Website. The Social Justice Committee believes that such a declaration should be voted on by the whole congregation.

There are opportunities to work with other faith and community groups to help immigrants who have chosen to come here for better, safer lives or who came as children and have grown up here as Americans. The Social Justice Committee will research the work of other organizations and ask the congregation for any contacts they may have.

Basically, the overall work of the Sanctuary Movement would provide such services as the following:

- “Public witness,” a way of making a public statement and literally using our bodies to call attention to injustices, in solidarity with those who are suffering—through marches, rallies, mass vigils, or acts of civil disobedience.
- Building & Deepening Relationships with Local Immigrant Communities
- Working Toward Restoring Trust and Resisting “Secure Communities”:
Local police and jails funnel thousands of people into deportation through the misleadingly named “Secure Communities” (or S-Comm) program.
- Witness for Justice at Detention Centers
- Educate: sermons; stories; work for immigration reform